3 ERIK GUSTAF GEIJER'S (1783–1847) PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

[1]Just as everyone studies history in his own way and puts into it, or gathers from it, his own view, so where a perspectivist thinker is concerned everyone believes himself able to interpret what he said, might or really should have meant to say. In Geijer's case philosophers, historians, theologians have competed to expound his texts.

[2]My reason is different. Exoteric history is a product of the normal individual's conception of past events. The muse of that history is no sticker for the truth, however, but a story-teller.

[3]There is nevertheless an esoteric history, mirrored in the planetary memory, the imperishable archive of unadulterated reality in past time. Even if the greatest Swedish historian, Geijer, did not have access to that archive, yet his profound view of history evidences that he did on some occasion contact the world of Platonic ideas, called the causal world by esotericians. In any case he can be cited as an example of how history should be treated.

[4]Attempts exoterists have made at writing a philosophy of history demonstrate that their knowledge of reality and life, a necessary condition of a correct understanding of past events and certainly of most other things, is so scant that every endeavour is fictitious.

[5]In what follows, only those ideas of Geijer are taken up that at least show a kinship to the esotericians' view on history. Whatever ideas of a thinker are not in tune with the ideas of the causal world belong to the perishable and can be safely omitted. They are part of that unnecessary burden which human beings love to drag along.

[6]Geijer had a highly developed sense of history. But then it was not his first incarnation as a historian. Anyone who can gaze as deep into history, anyone to whom all explanations are primarily historical, has an innate sense of history as a latent awareness of the past, has acquired the capacity for transporting himself into epochs long-past. It is also clear that Geijer had been an initiate of the esoteric society of the gnosticians. He had long been familiar with the pertaining symbols, which made him especially fond of resorting to gnostic ideas to explain things that properly were in the field of philosophy. He had attained the stage of humanity, which appears in the fact that he found it relatively easy to access the ideas of the causal world in his superconsciousness. This also explains how he, guided by a sure instinct, could find his way out of that labyrinth of philosophical fantasies where philosophers of his times, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, wandered aimlessly and from where their successors have not found the exit yet.

[7]Nobody is able to set himself entirely free from the fictions with which he was burdened during the years of his childhood, youth, and education. The law of absolute contradiction, which is taught in formal logic and is part of the lower mental inference and principle thinking, left its mark on him and often prevented his doing what he, being a perspective thinker, wanted most of all: emphasizing mutually contradictory views, unconcerned whether he in so doing would seem to contradict himself. The law mentioned forced him to exclude ideas that were in conflict with each other. Some hesitation is noticeable in his choice between different ideas. He saw what was legitimate in them all but was hindered from doing them all justice. He made such exclusions, however, only when he was cautiously weighing in his mind ideas that, on the face of it, invalidated each other. In moments of inspiration during his lectures, he could undauntedly contradict himself. And the audience gave in, seized and touched by the power of the very ideas.

[8]Only an objective investigation in the emotional and mental worlds can establish the extent to which Geijer had to pay regard to the prejudices and idiosyncrasies of his times. In his lectures and speeches he defied and challenged intolerance. His strong position among the young men at the university protected him from insidious plots and made his slanderers hide in the dark. Only once did hatred, leaning on legal formalities, dare to show its true face. His

statement on trinity, imprudent considering clerical bigotry, brought down on him a prosecution for blasphemy threatening exile. Nevertheless he succeeded, thanks to his brilliant dialectics, in clearing himself of the accusation and being acquitted by the jury. The public prosecution of him, one of Sweden's noblest personalities, shall not be forgotten, however, but shall remain in memory as one more proof of the power of envy over petty minds and the persecution of great souls wrought by hatred in all ages.

[9]The problems that occupied all intellectuals in Geijer's times included the problem of knowledge and the problem of genius.

[10]Subjectivist fictionalism came into existence through Descartes and Locke. It succeeded in making what was directly given into something inconceivable. After Kant definitively made it incomprehensible, they tried in vain to find a way out of the labyrinth of sophisms.

[11]Geijer solved the problems once and for all in an original manner. According to his view, all knowledge is revelation and depends on reciprocity. The personalities reveal themselves to each other. In that way knowledge of man is obtained. Knowledge of the invisible we receive by God being revealed to us.

[12]One of his biographers says that Geijer did not state in what way his theory of revelation could be true of man's relation to the world of material objects. That assertion is due to an oversight, however.

[13]According to Geijer, everything, material objects included, has consciousness and is a personality. And the personalities speak revelations to us, if we care to listen to them.

[14]The esoterician concurs with Leibniz in everything consisting of monads. Against the Swedish philosophers of personality he asserts that only those monads who have reached the kingdom of man possess self-consciousness and so can be regarded as "personalities".

[15]The value of history, according to Geijer, is that it affords us knowledge of life and men, helps us understand and live better. From this it is clear that history is part of life view and not of world view. The term "world view" should best be reserved for the conception of the matter aspect provided by natural science.

[16]Geijer offered several explanations of the mission and aim of history. History shows the striving of mankind to establish the universal state. It desires the realization of freedom. It is the development of spirit into ever richer consciousness. It makes up the process of atonement for man's apostasy from unity.

[17]Geijer emphasized with vigour that history cannot be such a dialectic process of development actuated by wiseacre reason, as Hegel proposed, and that such a process cannot be constructed. If history could be constructed, it would no longer be history, for everything that suffers itself to be constructed is a thing that is past to thought. Man has a history because he cannot say in beforehand how he will think and act. Thus it is impossible to invent a scheme that man must follow in his actions. What is called "morality" is a collection of conventions and customs. A true conception of right must be based on knowledge of the laws of life and then leave to the individual to find the ways in which these laws can be applied. The conception of right acquired by a people through painful experience is a product that belongs to history or sociology, but not to philosophy.

[18]History shows us the path mankind walked in the past. It shows us what experience we have gained in various spheres of life. It shows us people's relations to each other in formations of society and state, how communities and nations arise and disappear after they have fulfilled their mission or how they perish through their own fault. It shows us the genesis of religion and conception of right, science and art.

[19]History affords us the collection of facts about the past. To have some significance, their significance to be understandable, these facts are ranged under reality ideas that explain their true meaning. If we did not know the ideas we should never be able to insert most facts into their correct contexts. The ideas come to us through inspiration, "divine revelation". Ideas can

be said to include everything reaching the waking consciousness via the superconscious. History preserves and works at the experience of mankind through which we acquire knowledge of reality and life, of people and of ourselves.

[20]History shows us how we lived in the past. Living history enables us quickly to revive our latent understanding of what we learned once, and to orient ourselves in existence.

[21]There is exoteric history and there is esoteric history. The former has, regrettably, given us too few facts and many misconceptions of human beings during some twelve thousand years. It shows us what human beings, with their limited resources, are able to discover; how mankind has in certain respects risen above the animal stage to the stages of barbarism and civilization; how a few individuals have hastened ahead of evolution; that no nation has yet attained the stage of culture, even if certain beginnings have occurred sporadically. It knows nothing of the nations that lived during millions of years in those two vast continents, Lemuria and Atlantis, nowadays on the bottom of the ocean.

[22]The history of the world was to Geijer the scene showing the development of life from a basis inaccessible to reason towards increasing clarity, towards ever higher forms of life. What is valuable in historical phenomena follows from this. If there were no process of development, history would be without meaning.

[23]By way of introduction it would be apposite to eliminate two seemingly ineradicable misconceptions to which Geijer, too, fell victim.

[24]It is a misconception of the idea of original pantheism, if it is taken as the abolition of individual diversity, as the destruction of individuality. This misinterpretation of pantheism denies the immortality of the individual and considers life in the form annihilated when the form dissolves to return to an impersonal source of life.

[25]It is a misrepresentation of Platon to attribute to him a denial of the value of individual life. Platon, who was an initiate, knew very well that all life is both individual and collective. To him, however, constancy and endurance was represented by the individual monad, existing in the world of ideas and incarnating from there time and again. The incarnation, on the other hand, he regarded as a temporary product, which it certainly is, even though it is vouchsafed to it to make a contribution to development. Right and state, science, art, and religion exist in the ideas of the causal world, both as ideals and as constantly transformed images of physical life phenomena. Those live ideas consisting of matter and force are significant for man as examples and sources of power. In teaching this Platon by no means wanted to depreciate the value of physical life creations. But the concept of development was part of the esoteric and was, moreover, inconceivable to his contemporaries.

[26]On the other hand, Geijer's ideas of evil in existence and of freedom and necessity ("free will") are in accord with the corresponding esoteric ideas.

[27]All life makes up a unity. This unity is the divine in existence or God. As Geijer viewed it, evil in the world is the result of man's apostasy from God and self-deification. This self-glorification, self-assertion is precisely Satanism. In pursuing it man denies the existence of a higher power, destroys that reciprocity which is the breath of life for all, dissolves the community with other individuals, severs the connection with unity, and sows hatred, division, counteracts unity. "Salvation" consists in the individual giving up his will directed against unity and returns to unity.

[28]Necessity is the will of god and man becomes free to the extent that his will coincides with the will of god. Geijer was perfectly clear about the fact that only the law affords freedom. Combining freedom with law, he writes, a freedom that institutes true manners, is the foremost task of mankind which only the continuous endeavours of all epochs will be able to accomplish.

[29]According to esoterics, freedom is realized though application of the Law (the sum total of all laws of nature and laws of life) without friction. Man develops his will, gains "free-

will", by identifying himself with ever higher ideals and by emancipating himself from identification with lower ideals. We reach the goal only by complying with the law. We fail, are crushed, if we defy the law.

[30]Geijer's teaching on conscience is esoteric, too. Conscience (from con-scientia, "shared knowing") is shared knowledge of the same ideas of right. That is widely different from the definition of conscience used in theological fictionalism.

[31]Geijer suffered at times from an "innate" sense of guilt. His latent familiarity with gnostic symbolism, misdirected by the exoteric fictions of sin and atonement inoculated in his childhood, made him misinterpret his depression. He realized, however, that the orthodox view is absurd. Within the limits of the freedom of expression in religious matters granted at the time, he seeks to afford a rational explanation of the Jewish legend of the fall and salvation. Man has withdrawn from God. Atonement consists in man's decision, like that of the erring son, to arise and return to his father's house. Geijer opposes energetically the superstition that the son of God would be the atoner in an external sense, as a sacrifice. He writes: "As a unique person the son is a vanishing fact." Atonement consists in "Christos" (the gnostic term for unity) being born and arising in each individual human being.

[32]Geijer considered it a "base idea" that the second person of the deity should have sacrificed himself to atone and satisfy the first person's punitive righteousness. He maintained the ideas, obvious to an unconfused sense of right, that God cannot exclude anyone and that the individual is his own punisher and revenger.

[33]According to Geijer, three persons of the godhead are an unnecessary metaphysical subtlety, polytheism foreign to Christianity. Trinity belongs to the revelation of god in time, not to the eternal being.

[34]According to esoterics, the innate metaphysical need and the feeling of guilt are two more proofs among countless ones of the "pre-existence of the soul". The deposits of the subconscious preserve facts about misdeeds committed in past lives. The superconscious sees what has not yet been made good but remains to be atoned for.

[35]Tradition and renewal are, according to Geijer, equally important. Tradition dies if it becomes mere tradition. For it to become life it must enter as a renewing factor into actual life.

[36]The past lives in the present, is a power in the present. This affords to history a greater significance for the understanding of the present, which contains both past and future.

[37]The relation of the past to the present determines the character of epochs. There is growth if new forces get the better of resisting forces of the past. Stability is obtained if their union has arrived at equilibrium. Decay ensues if resistance against the new forces prevails. Whatever perishes deserves to perish. Destruction befalls only that which is of the lower.

[38]The nation lives, not only in the present, but also in and by its memories. Tradition is the people's unbroken awareness of itself as a nation, has at all times made the nation a unity, a personality.

[39]Each moment in the life of a nation includes all its past, nay the past life of mankind. We carry the history of many thousands of years within us, and each epoch has made its contribution to the wealth of our education. Our study of history is not the assimilation of things that are foreign to us and outside of us. It is the development into full clarity, from within ourselves, of that which lives in our unconscious, perhaps without our reflection on it. It is learning how to understand ourselves.

[40]Anyone who is able to study past lives sees that we took part in shaping those conditions in which we are suffering. We are reborn to reap what we have sown. The past binds us with firm ties to the present.

[41]According to Geijer, development, comprising physical life, historical life, and superphysical life, consists in personal relationships becoming increasingly multiplied and

spiritualized. Personalities develop by coming into touch with each other. A human being is connected, and should be connected, with other human beings and with god. God is experienced in history in the same way as human beings, by means of the two concurrent processes affording knowledge: he meets man through revelations, and man opens himself up to him. Personalities can develop only by touching one another. It is true that each person has all mankind within him as dispositions, but these dispositions can develop only as the individual meets other persons, whether he sees such dispositions realized in them or they incite him to realize his own individual and characteristic ones. It is as if in each outer connection with rational beings they immediately touched and recognized each other through one and the same double, reciprocal, and yet simultaneous action. This reciprocal rousing and kindling of thought and thought, of will and will, is the one, eternal, manifest wonder in our whole life, which fills every moment while not becoming less wonderful therefore.

[42]The past lives in the present, but also the present influences our conception of the past, and this so intensely that the power of the past over, and action on, the present again change by it. The past shines down its potency into the present; in fact it leads an undying life in the consciousness of mankind.

[43]Perishable man, the child of the yesterday, reads alone this starry writing of the past. It is the thoughts of the dead. Yet those thoughts stir, touch, amaze, and fascinate us, as though there were in them an animating spirit; and the spirit is there, since it is perceived and understood. In the same way, the spirit immanent in earthly life can manifest such effects by its mere being and its existence without by far being aware of all these effects of it. The dead live, too. And anyone who meditates much on the thoughts of the dead is the one least able to doubt this. The dead live in a double sense: in their historical lives and as beings living on in higher worlds.

[44]Geijer is the founder of the Swedish philosophy of personality. It is one of the many proofs of his latent esoteric knowledge and familiarity with the pertaining causal ideas. This philosophy was later given a less successful formulation by Boström, which is to be regretted.

[45]According to Leibniz, existence is made up of monads at different levels of development. Geijer preferred the term “personality” and attributed other qualities to the personality. Personality was an immortal rational being which had self-conscious and self-determined individuality and – collectivity! This is the right pantheism: collectivity with individuality never to be lost!

[46]Philosophical speculation often “solved” problems by confusing them. In opposing “nature and spirit” philosophers had mixed up different ideas: matter and consciousness, lower and higher stages of development.

[47]In his innate instinct Geijer possessed that Ariadne’s clue which guided him out of the labyrinth of false ideas. He clearly realized that there is no opposition of spirit and matter, that nature is spirit and spirit is nature. If by “nature” you mean what is lower and by “spirit” what is higher, then development (education, culture) brings about the raising of the dark, unconscious lower up into clear awareness of the higher and, therefore, into the dominion of freedom so that it can be controlled.

[48]Geijer considered not just the individual but also a group of individuals to be a personality. According to his view, the collective is original. It is the expression of unity. It makes up the natural bond between human beings. It manifests itself in common ideas of right, in the interaction between common ideas, and in the living sense of community and solidarity.

[49]Individuality gains independence only in connection with wholeness. Man senses that he is a part of a whole in so far as he knows himself. The collective spirit is the being common to all such as it manifests itself in national sense and national solidarity. This sense of community is so strong that even if the individuals separated their interests, which would lead to the ruin of the nation, yet the idea of community would survive. This sense of community

tends to neutralize everything individual. It binds inclinations and customs together so as to form that reciprocal whole which characterizes a certain society. It makes people increasingly dependent on each other. It makes them share more in what is common, in culture, which implies the development of the abilities of all people. Even if they strive in different directions and seem to be able to counteract that which is common, yet it appears that the underlying community is stronger and this to the extent that individual highhandedness becomes manifest.

[50]If freedom were not unity, the individuals would never give up their natural freedom to become dependent on each other. In so far as individuals try to break this unity up, as happens sometimes in revolutions to the detriment of the individuals themselves, its power becomes the more obvious. The more the individuals try to isolate themselves, the more deeply they sense all the misery of that necessity which even amid mutual hatred forces people to develop ever stronger mutual dependence. It is the natural curse secretly inherent in society which is indelible to the man left to himself and which like the voice of a vague despair passes through the ages in the general more or less loud complaint: that in the states the burdens increase with work, need with wealth, crime with instruction, as in constant hostile frenzy without peace, pause, rest.

[51]In all conceivable contexts and situations, Geijer was anxious to stress the fact that we are all in some respect dependent on each other, need help from each other, that there is always something that a certain person can do better than the others. Geijer emphasized that human interdependence becomes increasingly manifest as society is differentiated. The advancement of culture brings about increase of the respect for the personality. Everybody learns how to see all the others as independent personalities and to treat them as such. All life is a mutual give and take. And precisely this is “the one eternal manifest miracle in existence”.

[52]Life is an inevitable condition of reciprocity. Goodness manifests itself in the fact that those able to do so help those in need. Evil is the abolition of reciprocity. History shows us the continually growing, the ever more complex relatedness that forces people to draw ever closer to each other. Interdependence manifests itself in the fact that we do not just act for each other but also suffer for each other. Let man deny reciprocity and interdependence. He may transform its effects into happy or unhappy ones. He is nevertheless unable to alter the law of unity. The law makes itself felt more and more indissolubly, in discord if not in concord, in hatred if not in love, in evil if not in good. It is the source of misery and happiness, the curse or blessing of civilization. If all were pervaded at one and the same moment by this sublime sense of the inevitability of unity joining all things human together, people would turn and recognize each other as brothers.

[53]Even collectives possess personalities, a fact that only those can grasp who were formerly initiated into esoterics and who consequently have latent knowledge of that fact.

[54]Collective consciousness or group consciousness brings about, for all members of the group, common consciousness which may be perceptible in an individual member’s waking consciousness or still be part of his superconscious. It will be part of that individual’s waking consciousness only when he can gain access to that superconsciousness.

[55]Group consciousness is a step on the path to the world of unity. In that world, everyone has access to the consciousness of all the other individuals besides having his own individual consciousness. Hence the esoteric saying: for there is nothing hid that shall not be manifested. The path to the essential world (world 46) goes through constantly widening collective consciousness. More and more other beings are embraced in the individual’s own consciousness. The individual experiences that all make up a unity, that there is no loneliness. We are all united in unity whether we know it or not. Then the path to it may be short or long.

[56]That individual who has once contacted the essential world is not always able to maintain himself in it, which is a fact that is a source of never-ending amazement and unlimited guess-

work. When in physical waking consciousness, the monad is in the physical world and not in the essential world. It will remain imperfect in the physical world until it has acquired the essential qualities.

[57]As soon as a collective arises, a group of individual consciousnesses is formed, it is taken care of by an evolutionary being in higher worlds, since all collectives are paths to unity. All higher worlds are filled with beings who have become one with unity and with the law of service. That being, who seeks to safeguard the continuance of the collective, is the "personality" of the collective also in individual respect. It gathers the consciousness expressions of the individuals as to what is common into a vitalizing and inspiring "thought-form", which makes the individual give up at least some of his egocentricity and exclusivity in altruistic work at common tasks. Those who have reached the stage of humanity doggedly pursue the aims of the collective being.

[58]There are many kinds of collective "personalities". To mention only the social ones: family (nuclear and extended), clan, class, nation, race, mankind.

[59]Geijer divided the life of mankind into three phases of development: childhood, youth, and maturity. Each successive phase is higher in its conception of right than its predecessor.

[60]This brings Geijer into problems that cannot be solved without esoteric facts. Consciousness development does not admit of being ascertained in exoteric history. It takes too long periods of time. It is constantly interrupted. Incarnating clans and classes are found at different stages of development. The only fact that can be established exoterically is that there are and there will always be societies composed of individuals who are on widely different levels.

[61]Man is by no means such a late phenomenon in the course of past events as Geijer thought. Our globe has witnessed cultures of which the normal individual is unable to know anything. Here "culture" does not term such a sporadic phenomenon as Greek culture. It was the work of a clan that had reached the stage of culture and higher. When its members did not consider it worthwhile going on incarnating, that culture disappeared.

[62]As a social philosopher Geijer proved to possess the humanist's common sense also in his political theories.

[63]Mankind strives instinctively to realize the universal state. Geijer emphasized with full clarity the idea, evident to the esoterician, that unity can never be reached by violence or cunning, forcible means or suppression of freedom. Everything that wars against the laws of freedom and unity is bound to crumble.

[64]Many people see the state as an institution for the protection against external and internal enemies, an institution abolishing the state of nature where there was a war of everyone against everyone. Such a view always brings with it an opposition between state and individual.

[65]The philosophy of personality looked upon states, nations, communities as personalities dependent on and serving each other. This implied a social sense of community, solidarity, and responsibility. The strength of the nation depended on the individual's knowledge, understanding, and ability.

[66]According to esoterics, the purpose of the state is to enable the collective to attain culture and the individual to attain higher levels of development, so that individuals who are at the stage of culture can incarnate and serve mankind and the nation efficiently. The nation fulfils its historical function by contributing to the all-round activation of consciousness in its unique way. It does so in the best way by cooperating with other nations, thus not by seeking isolation and obstructing interchange.

[67]Geijer had a clear idea of the fact that the great figures in history were those personalities who consciously or unconsciously became instruments in the service of evolution. The individual's contribution to life or history becomes great to the extent that it furthers progress,

helps people live, discovers ideas, and imparts knowledge facilitating man's self-realization.

[68]Geijer has a few serious words to say also to those who in our times idolize Nietzschean megalomania with its ridiculous self-assertion and self-importance. He is a fool who wants to leave his mark on development. Posterity rather quickly blots out all traces of an author, leaving only that which everybody must sooner or later assimilate, that which is found in higher worlds. The ideas have always existed. We can never tell who was the first one privileged to bring down a certain idea from the world of ideas.

[69]Geijer was mistaken when he thought that citizenship in the kingdom of god was the same as democracy. The two ideas have nothing in common. Democracy preaches the equality of all people in respect of development, which is a grave error. Human individuals are found on many hundreds of different levels of development. In contrast, it is correct that all are personalities having inviolable rights as individuals and citizens. All have the same human dignity, equality before the law, the right to free competition, the right to be assessed according to their capabilities only. The kingdom of god is the kingdom of superman, and nobody enters it who cannot enter unity. Certainly that kingdom is within man, since everything higher penetrates everything lower. Otherwise no one in the physical world could contact higher worlds. To the individual, however, there is no kingdom of god in reality until he has achieved contact with that higher state within himself, in his own consciousness.

[70]The historical view, according to Geijer, includes understanding of context and continuity in history and the importance of reciprocal influences. Without these two principles, history is no scholarly discipline. Mere cognizance of changes without understanding of context and continuity affords no knowledge.

[71]Where state is concerned history examines the continuity of the inner development of the state, the interaction between the state and the individual, and the relations between states.

[72]In the dispute between adherents of the theory of natural law and that of tradition, Geijer took a mediatory position. As he viewed it, there was a justification for both theories of society.

[73]The advocates of natural law, the first theory to arise, considered that the state was formed through voluntary agreement among individuals and that law was a product of the arbitrary will of legislators.

[74]The adherents of the second theory thought that the supporters of natural law had a poor sense of history which, they held, was the ability to perceive what was characteristic of each historic epoch. They were of the opinion that both state and law were slow formations, were historical products, that human beings had always lived in some kind of society however primitive. Law had come into existence as common law through traditional customs expressive of forces acting quietly and not through decrees arbitrarily issued by legislators. The individual was born into a community with its laws without being asked whether he approved of them or not.

[75]The advocates of tradition or feudalism were especially fond of comparing society to an organism. It is an analogy that misleads more than it elucidates. That fanciful conception was considered such a success, however, that things were increasingly likened to organisms: society, state, laws, science, works of art, etc. Fichte, who had a mania for absolutization, was not content with merely comparing society to an organism. To him, society was an organism. By means of slogans he sought to make a great impression on the critical faculty, paralyse it, create taboos the correctness of which must not be challenged. "Organism" was used as a buzz word to work all manner of mischief. Things they wished to promote they called "organic", things they opposed they called "inorganic".

[76]The dispute about the two social theories had concentrated on the main problem, that of the social contract. According to the one theory, the state should be founded on a contract between equals. The other theory regarded the family and the natural relations arising from it

as the origin of society.

[77]Geijer held that the practical formulation and importance in history of the social theories indicate which of their elements were correct and which were incorrect, perishable and enduring, and that opposing views could be derived from the structure of what is eternally right.

[78]His own research indicated to him that natural law and family law are equally justified and that both are to be found in the formations of societies. He distinguished two principles: democratic and feudal. In the democratic principle, he found that law and power originate from the people by commission of the people, that society is an association of equals formed on the basis of an explicit contract. In the feudal principle, he found that law and power originate from the head of society as a donation or a fief.

[79]Geijer criticized the excesses of the French revolution, which were due to a one-sided pursuit of the theory of the sovereignty of the people, as well as Locke's mechanistic view, according to which the state is an institution of mere external constraint and security. In its capacity of insurance office it could not demand that people sacrifice their property, nay even their lives, because property and life were precisely the things that the state was supposed to protect.

[80]The public spirit was to Geijer an innate urge in man. What holds a state together is a living conception of right determined by the sense of everybody's welfare and the will to unity. Anyone who overlooks the connection between conception of right and religion, between what is right and politics, fails to see what is indissoluble in their living relations. The communal spirit makes the community the unity it is. If the community is regarded as a mere external association of mutually conflicting wills, then that will to unity is dissolved which is the essential condition of the continuance of the community. Such a nation deserves to perish and will perish.

[81]The above is a sketch of Geijer's ideal view of history. It is to be hoped that such a history will soon be written.

The above text constitutes the essay *Erik Gustaf Geijer's Philosophy of History* by Henry T. Laurency.

The essay is part of the book *Knowledge of Life Five* by Henry T. Laurency, published in Swedish in 1995. Translation by Lars Adelskogh.